



Name of Project: Starting Point: Your Aging & Disability Resource Center

Name of Organization: Partnership between *Illinois Department on Aging, the Northwestern and East Central Illinois Area Agencies on Aging, and the Macon County Health Department*

Principles of Choices for Independence: Empowerment/Access to Information and Services, Evidence-Based Prevention and Wellness, and Consumer Direction

Description

As a 2004 Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) grantee, Illinois used the ADRC as an opportunity to build upon its successful single point of entry system of Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and Case Coordination Units (CCU). The Illinois Department on Aging partnered with the Northwestern Illinois AAA (NIAAA) and the East Central Illinois AAA (ECIAAA) to pilot the ADRC initiative in Winnebago and Macon counties. Since the inception of the project, the NIAAA has expanded the ADRC initiative to cover all 9 counties of their service area.

In Macon County, the ECIAAA partnered with the Macon County Health Department CCU to create *Starting Point* which is one of the first ADRCs in the nation to carryout all three Choices Components in one service area. These components include:

- Empowering consumers of all ages and income levels to make informed decisions about their care options;
- Targeting flexible services, including consumer-directed models, at persons who are at high risk of nursing home placement, but not yet eligible for Medicaid; and
- Mobilizing the aging, public health, and nonprofit networks to implement evidence-based disease prevention (EBDP) programs in the community. EBDP programs have proven effective in reducing the risk of disease and disability among older adults.

Starting Point provides one-on-one long-term care options counseling and a comprehensive needs assessment for all older adults and persons with physical disabilities. In Illinois, CCUs serve as central access point for older persons who have intensive long-term care needs. If a person has a functional impairment(s) and needs housekeeping assistance, home-delivered meals, personal care, or other services, he or she can contact the nearest CCU or AAA. Similar one-on-one options counseling is provided by the NIAAA Resource Center for older adults and persons with developmental disabilities. At each ADRC, staff are trained and certified on numerous benefits and programs including information & referral, the Senior Health and Insurance Program and Person Centered Planning. In addition, the centers have expanded their caregiver support services to previously underserved populations such as grandparents raising grandchildren.

Another unique feature about *Starting Point* is that every person in Macon County, regardless of age or income, is screened before they enter an institution. Case managers from the ADRC conduct the screenings primarily in hospitals immediately prior to patient discharge. The screening process gives consumers and their families the opportunity to ask questions, discuss their needs for services and to understand community-based, as well as institutional options for continuing care.

A key characteristic of what defines an ADRC is its ability to initiate and develop partnerships with multiple entities. The NIAAA Resource Center partnership efforts have been showcased at state and national conferences. Some of NIAAA's key partners who have been involved with the ADRC and system change efforts include:

Access Services of Northern Illinois
Alzheimer's Association
Catholic Charities
CONTACT of Rockford
Department of Human Services
DHS - Office of Rehabilitation
DHS - Office of Developmental
Disabilities
DHS - Office of Inspector General
Guardianship & Advocacy Commission

Illinois Growth Enterprises
Lifescape Community Services
RAMP
Rockford Human Services
Rosecrance
Social Security Administration
The ARC of Winnebago, Boone and
Ogle Counties
Visiting Nurses Association

Strong leadership and partnership building at the community level both from the AAA and CCU have been a key element in the success of Illinois' ADRC model. Illinois has also succeeded in passing single point of entry legislation, allocation of state resources to support comprehensive case management and the creation of a statewide single point of entry workgroup for statewide replication.

For more information on Illinois' ADRC and Starting Point, please contact Ross Grove at (217) 524-7627 or by e-mail ross.grove@illinois.gov.